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Monitoring of population programmes, focusing on international migration and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report on the monitoring of population programmes focusing on international migration and development has been prepared in response to the topic-oriented and prioritized multi-year work programme of the Commission on Population and Development, which had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1995/55. In its decision 2004/1, the Commission decided that international migration and development should be the special theme for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission.

The report explores the implications of international migration as they relate to development and points out that international migration is a global issue and clearly a central part of the global development agenda. It describes the current international migration situation with a focus on global South-North migration. The report focuses on the impact on development of the brain drain, brain gain, brain circulation, remittances, the diaspora, and return migration. It highlights the importance of building and strengthening the capacities of Governments and other stakeholders to meet the challenges posed by international migration. The report considers important elements that have potential for policy intervention that can enhance positive development impacts and mutually beneficial solutions for countries of both origin and destination as well as for the migrants themselves. It also discusses barriers to, and opportunities for, such policy intervention.

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Introduction

1. The present report on the monitoring of population programmes, focusing on international migration and development, has been prepared by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in response to the topic-oriented and prioritized multi-year work programme of the Commission on Population and Development, which had been endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1995/55. In its decision 2004/1, the Commission decided that decision 2004/1, international migration and development, should be the special theme for the thirty-ninth session of the Commission.

2. The report looks at the complex relationship between international migration and development and explores ways of reaping development gains from migration so as to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative consequences arising from migration flows. It focuses on the impact on development of the brain drain, brain gain, brain circulation, remittances, the diaspora and return migration. The report puts forth policy considerations to facilitate mutually beneficial outcomes for countries of both origin and destination as well as for the migrants themselves.

3. The international migration landscape has changed dramatically over the last decade. Exacerbated disparities between the North and the South, an expanding global economy, geopolitical transformations, wars, ecological disasters and other occurrences have had a profound impact on people and their desire to leave their homeland. Today, international migration has become a complex global issue that affects every country in the world, as point of origin, transit or destination and, often, as all three at once. As a result, there is a growing interest among Governments, the United Nations system, civil society, the private sector and many other groups affected by migration to explore ways to capitalize on the benefits and minimize the negative consequences of migration. At the global level, international migration is increasingly being perceived as a development tool. It is no longer seen as a failure of development, but rather as an integral part of the global development process.

4. The number of persons living outside their country of birth more than doubled from 76 million in 1960 to 175 million in 2000. Today it stands at almost 200 million.[1] There is an increased concentration of international migrants in the developed world — about 60 per cent of the world's migrants live in developed countries. Most are found in a small number of countries. International migrants account for anywhere from 10 per cent to two thirds of the population in some countries.

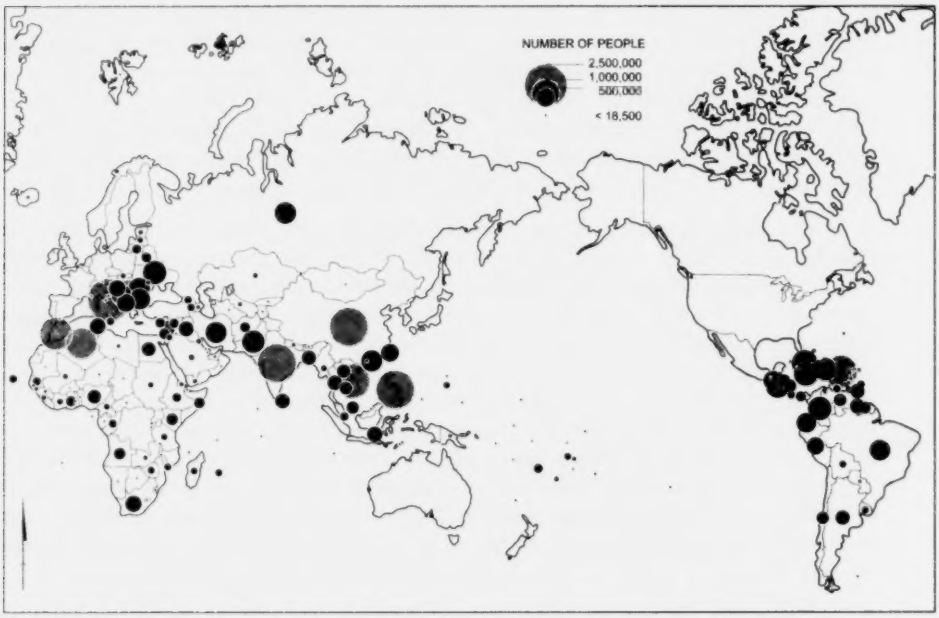
5. While such movements have always existed, they have recently been facilitated by developments in transportation and communication and the globalization of labour markets. Migration has increased because of widening income differentials between sending and receiving countries, high unemployment rates, and education gaps in many developing countries, as well as changing demographic trends including ageing of the population and declining numbers of persons of working age in a number of developed countries.

6. It is estimated that between 1995 and 2000 more-developed countries experienced a 12 million net migration gain from less-developed nations.[2] One of the key results of these population shifts has been the rapid growth of communities of expatriates from less developed countries residing in more developed nations.

This is apparent from figure I, which shows the numbers of persons born in developing South countries who were enumerated in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in the 2000 round of censuses. The censuses counted 46 million expatriates in OECD countries born outside of Europe and North America.

Figure I

Persons born in "South" nations enumerated in OECD nations in the 2000 round of censuses



Source: OECD database on immigrants and expatriates. Available from http://www.oecd.org/documents/51/0,2340,en_2649_33931_34063091_1_1_1_1,00.html.

Note: This represents a significant underestimate because data were not available for all OECD countries, including some significant immigrant nations, and, in most cases, there was a significant underenumeration of the foreign-born.

7. In addition to the more-or-less permanent communities of expatriates in developed countries, there is also large-scale circulation of workers from less developed to more developed countries. This includes highly skilled, highly paid international migrants working in the global labour market. It also includes low-paid, lower-skilled workers needed in labour markets in countries where fertility has fallen well below replacement level and the local labour force has ceased to grow. These movements are both South-North and South-South. For example, at any one time there are about 20 million Asians working on a temporary basis outside their homeland in more developed countries in the region, especially those in the Middle East and other Asian nations. There are also migration flows of both skilled and unskilled workers from Asia to Africa and within Africa.

8. Almost half of the world's international migrants are women. Once considered passive players who accompanied or joined migrating husbands or other family members, women are playing an increasing role in international migration. In some countries, women constitute between 70 and 80 per cent of the migrant population. While the diversity of female migration is increasing, women still tend to be more concentrated in traditionally female occupations such as domestic work and entertainment as well as in the caregiving and nurturing skilled professions such as nursing. Some move as "mail order brides".

9. Because women migrants are often found in gender-segregated and unregulated sectors of the economy, they are at a much higher risk of gender discrimination, violence and abuse. The demand for women for specific types of work also renders them more vulnerable to unauthorized migration including trafficking. The feminization of migration and the abuses often experienced by women migrants call for the recognition of gender equality as an integral part of the process of policymaking, planning, programme delivery and monitoring at all levels. Protection of human rights and equal access to legal and health services are especially important when it comes to addressing the challenges faced by migrant women.

10. In the increasing global discussion on international migration, one of the most promising dimensions from a policy perspective is that which is centred around the complex interrelationships between migration on the one hand and economic development and social change on the other. This is promising for at least two reasons. First, the potential for policy to enhance the positive effects of migration and mitigate the negative impacts opens up the possibility that migration can become a net contributor to the important global agenda of reducing poverty in South countries. Second, this issue has the potential to bring together both sending and receiving countries to develop mutually beneficial migration situations, whereas in the past there was not much dialogue between the two groups. What is needed are sound policy and programme interventions based on a solid understanding of the dynamics of contemporary international migration and the two-way relationship with development.

I. Brain drain, brain gain and brain circulation

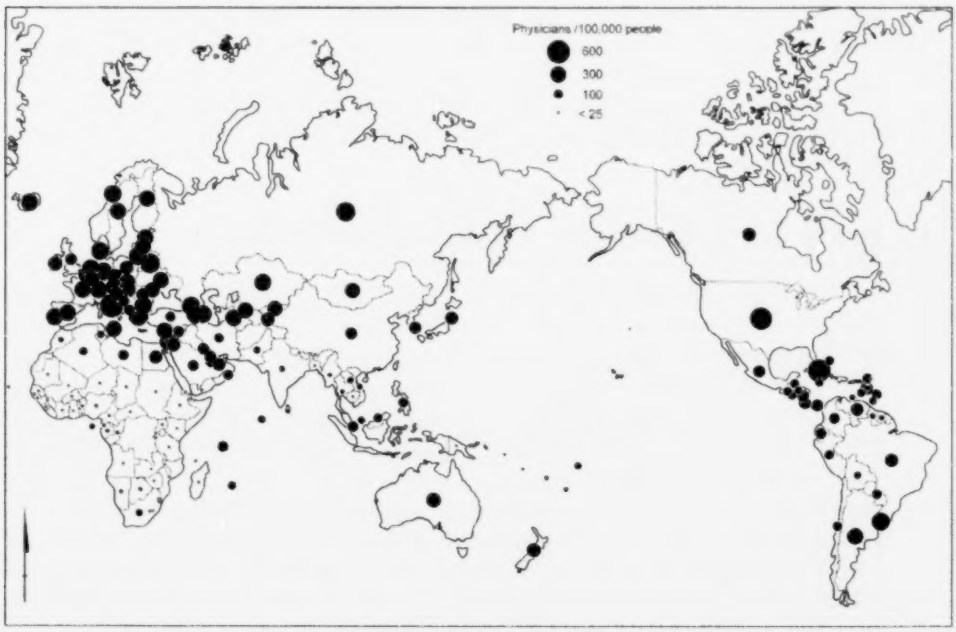
11. Until recently, the discussion on international migration, especially South-North flows, focused on the exodus of highly educated and highly skilled segments of the population. This has drained developing nations of their most talented residents and exacerbated the constraints that low levels of human capital have imposed on development opportunities in these countries. It has been only in recent years that a counter-view has been stressing some of the positive impacts of migration on origin areas.

12. Statistics show that 88 per cent of immigrants to OECD countries have a secondary education or higher qualifications but that large developing nations do not lose a high proportion of their highly skilled persons to OECD countries (see J. Dumont and G. Lemaitre, "Counting immigrants and expatriates in OECD countries: a new perspective in OECD", in *Trends in International Migration* (Paris, OECD, 2005). Those nations with large proportions of their skilled nationals in foreign countries are predominantly smaller. OECD points out that brain drain may

adversely impact smaller nations in particular, preventing them from reaching a critical mass of human resources necessary to foster long-term economic development.

13. While the aggregate numbers are significant, it is also important to look at *who* moves. Those who migrate are usually among the most highly skilled workers whose professional profiles can be attractive to markets in receiving countries. Increased ageing of the population in developed countries and the relative decline of the size of the labour force have created a need to hire workers from abroad. The demand for skilled migrants in receiving countries coupled with push factors in the countries of origin has driven increasing numbers of highly skilled and highly educated workers abroad. Their emigration represents a severe drain on their country's development efforts. A number of developing countries are currently experiencing serious deficits in the health-care system because of the emigration of doctors, nurses and other health personnel who are more likely to find markets abroad. This has serious implications for the development potential and well-being of populations in sending countries, especially countries most affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The emigration of doctors and nurses may reduce the likelihood of some countries' meeting the Millennium Development Goals for improving maternal health, reducing child mortality and combating HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Figure II shows that there are significant differentials between North and South in the numbers of persons per doctor.

Figure II
Physicians per 100,000 people North and South, 1990-2004



Source: United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report, 2005* (New York, UNDP, 2005).

14. The relationship between student migration and the brain drain has recently received increased attention. Increasing numbers of tertiary students studying outside their home country remain in the country of destination. There is also a significant South-North flow of money for fees and living costs, with the total paid to host nations each year by foreign students being estimated at US$ 30 billion.[3]

15. Sending countries face a real dilemma with respect to the emigration of skilled workers and students. On the one hand, such movement can potentially contribute to development; on the other hand, the reality is that large numbers do not return. Human rights considerations and the realities of global migration make it impossible to prevent emigration. Nevertheless, the number of less and least developed countries that reported to the United Nations that they had policies to reduce emigration had increased from 17 in 1976 to 43 in 2003.[4]

16. Any unilateral attempt on the part of receiving countries to selectively exclude skilled immigrants from developing countries may not be acceptable from the perspective of the rights of individuals involved and is impractical given the current demographic and labour-market situation in many countries, including OECD countries. Any efforts in this direction would need to be multilateral, since a single nation could argue that if it excluded highly skilled migrants from less developed countries, those migrants would simply move to an alternative OECD destination.

17. Policies towards skilled South-North migration are increasingly in the agenda of development-assistance and professional communities in many countries including OECD countries. Among the policy suggestions that may work are those whereby countries of destination direct parts of their development assistance towards education and training in countries of origin from which they draw migrants. Other suggestions consist in inviting countries of destination to consider encouraging skilled migrants to take on dual nationality, maintain strong connections with their home country and circulate between country of origin and country of destination. Countries could also ensure the portability and mobility of all benefits to encourage circular movements. They could consider taking internal measures and providing incentives to ensure an adequate supply of workers in particular skill areas from within the national workforce.

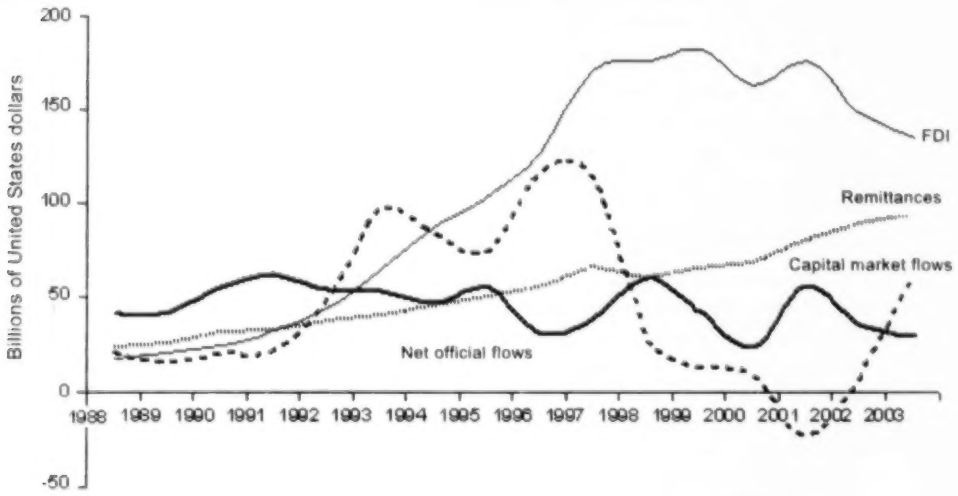
II. Remittances

18. Remittances from migrants to their home communities figure prominently in discussions of the impact of migration on development in sending countries. There is a new appreciation of the scale of remittances, which have at times been dismissed by some as peripheral and of limited scale and effect. Recent research shows a strong positive correlation between remittances and poverty reduction in developing countries. The average size of an international remittance may be quite modest; however, when added up, the thousands of transfers occurring every month reflect significant amounts of capital being sent from developed countries to the developing world. In many recipient countries, remittances play an essential role in sustaining national and local economies.

19. There is increasing recognition that only a fraction of total global remittances are accounted for in official statistics, and that money sent through informal channels accounts for a large part of the funds that move from migration-receiving to migration-sending countries. The latest estimates by the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) and the World Bank put global remittances at US$ 130 billion, $79 billion of which go to developing nations, while the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that if transfers through informal channels are included, remittances could be as high as $300 billion.[5] Remittances have long been larger than official development assistance (ODA) and now are probably larger than foreign direct investment (FDI) in less developed countries (figure III).

Figure III
Resource flows to developing countries, 1988-2003
(Billions of United States dollars)



Source: H. Bridi, World Bank Brussels Office, "Consequences of labour migration for the developing countries: management of remittances", presentation at Conference on Labour Migration, 26 February 2005.

20. In the current circumstances, remittances tend to be more predictable and stable than either ODA or FDI. In times of political or economic difficulties, migrants who work abroad tend to support their families even more by increasing the amount of money they send home. Remittances help lift families and communities left behind out of poverty, increase household income, enable family members to receive more education and training, and provide a source of capital for the establishment of small businesses. When remittances are used to purchase goods and services or when they are invested in community-based projects or businesses that hire workers, they benefit more than just the family members receiving the funds. Remittances are often the initial point of entry of poor families into the formal financial system, through, for example, opening a savings account, or obtaining a loan or mortgage.

21. In the past, the impact of remittances on development was largely dismissed because field evidence indicated that most money sent to family back home had not been invested in "productive" enterprises but was spent on consumer goods, especially on meeting basic needs and the construction and refurbishment of homes. However, it has been shown that a dollar spent for such activities has a multiplier

effect that ripples through local and regional economies and has significant poverty reduction and developmental impacts.

22. Remittances are seen to be effective in poverty reduction at a grass-roots level because they are passed directly from the migrant to the families and individuals in less developed countries so that they can be readily used to improve the situation of those people. On the other hand, FDI and ODA are mediated by an array of institutions that can dilute their impact at the level of individual communities and families. Hence, of all South-North financial flows, remittances are not only the largest but also those with the greatest impact upon improving the situation of ordinary people and providing relief from poverty.

23. It should be pointed out that migrants from developing countries are not drawn randomly from the entire population but tend to come from selected areas. The impact of remittances therefore tends to be concentrated in particular parts of a country where their effect is amplified. These are often poor, peripheral areas where remittances are the only source of foreign exchange and of capital inflow for development. The increasing focus on regional and decentralized development in developing countries has brought about an enhanced appreciation of the significance of remittances. To maximize the benefits of remittances, countries can still develop strategies that would channel the remittances into activities that promote economic development and employment growth.

24. While remittances have their greatest impact on development at the family, community and regional levels, their effects on national economies are also important for many developing countries. In some countries, remittances have reached over 10 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). Their national impact can be substantial in countries with small populations but they can be quite sizeable even in larger countries in relation to merchandise exports.

25. Receiving countries are typically concerned with maximizing the inflow of remittances and mobilizing the funds to enhance development. Affecting the levels of official remittances are the exorbitant costs that have often been involved in the process of sending money home, costs which can be as high as 15 per cent of the value of the transaction. Greater competition, advances in technology and greater awareness among relevant government agencies have reduced costs and made it easier for international migrants to remit via official channels. The fact remains, however, that transaction costs are often still too high and remitters are at the mercy of predatory institutions and individuals at both the sending and the receiving end. There is much that can be done by Governments at both ends of the process to maximize the proportion of remittances that get through and the speed and security of the process. This is the critical first step towards entering the financial mainstream for individual families and reaching the goal of financial democratization for a country.

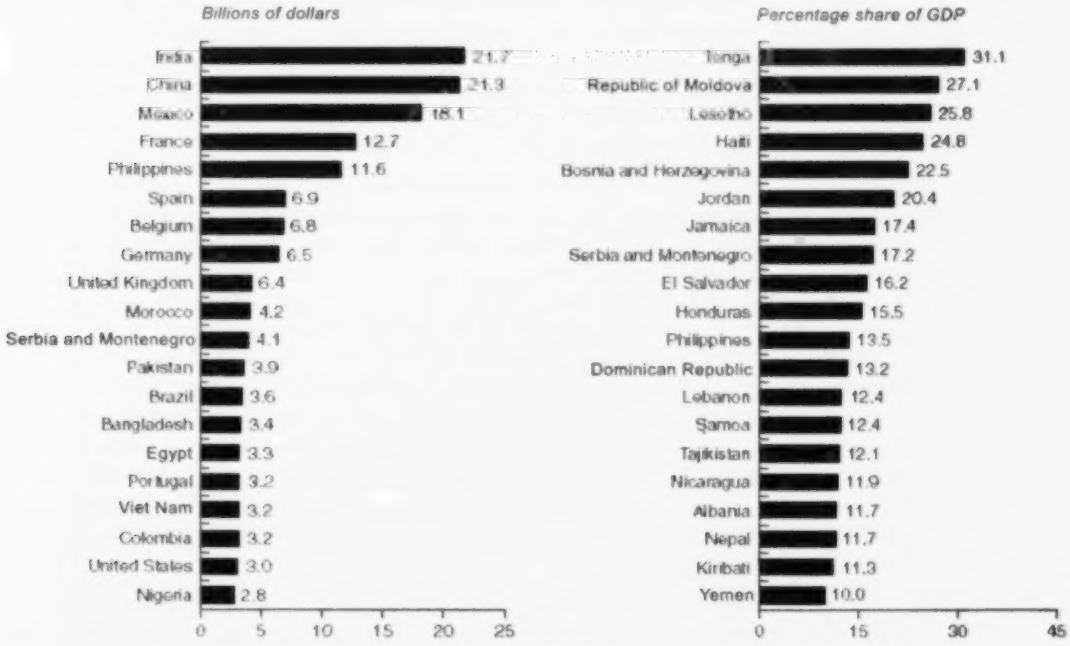
26. It has been shown that there is significant developmental impact if there is an increase in the proportion of remittances that flow through formal financial systems. Yet government authorities — national, regional and local — in countries of origin have often failed to create contexts that can leverage remittances to achieve developmental goals. Some countries attempted to tax remittances at various times but the main effect has been to divert more remittances through non-official channels. A number of innovative programmes that have been introduced with success include initiatives where federal and State Governments match remittances

for the purpose of undertaking developmental activity in depressed regions. However, these programmes target remittances sent by *groups* of migrants from the same area, the so-called hometown associations, and most remittances are still received by individual families.

27. It is worth noting that, although on average women migrants earn less than their male counterparts, they tend to remit a greater *proportion* of their earnings and are more regular and reliable remitters. It is essential that the gender dimension be included in the formulation of policies and programmes aimed at maximizing the development potential of migration flows.

28. The World Bank recently produced a list of nations that receive the largest remittance flows and those where remittances constitute the largest share of GDP. Most countries in which remittances represent more than 10 per cent of GDP are small, while the largest remittances are received in the larger countries where they generally represent a small proportion of GDP (figure IV). The latter means that remittances are often dismissed as being insignificant in poverty reduction in larger less developed nations but often this is not the case.

Figure IV
Top 20 remittance-recipient countries, 2004



Source: Global Economic Prospects, 2006: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2006).

III. The diaspora and development

29. While much of the migration and development debate focuses on the scale and impact of remittances, there is a growing realization that the positive developmental effects of migration are more complex. The increase in the scale and scope of international migration has resulted in a proliferation of social networks that link sending and receiving countries in a stronger and more intimate way than ever before. Such networks have always been a critical component in encouraging and facilitating further migration. They have also become conduits along which money, information, goods, ideas and information flow. What is different is the fact that modern information and communication technologies (ICT) have made it possible to maintain regular and intimate contacts between diasporas and home countries. Moreover, faster and cheaper means of international travel have made it possible for people to be transnational and move easily between countries, maintain a strong presence in more than a single country and keep a significant stake in both diaspora and country of origin. While migration does not always result in the formation of a diaspora community, there is evidence that in many cases such networks do exist and that they are expanding; and there is growing appreciation of the fact that a highly skilled diaspora may play an important role in promoting development and economic, social and political change at home.

30. Diasporas can be an important element in promoting the movement of FDI from country of destination to country of origin. They can enhance information flows, facilitate trade links and encourage capital arrangements resulting in an expansion of capital inflows from foreigners as well as from the diaspora. The rapid economic growth of a number of countries has been heavily influenced by diaspora investments. Overseas workers have been credited with convincing their companies to set up operations in their home countries. The diaspora can serve as a bridgehead into expansion of the economic linkages with the home country. Migrants often become entry points for the successful penetration of the local market by foreign manufacturers.

31. Diaspora networks have also become important in transmitting information in both formal and informal ways. Professionals in countries of origin and destination often maintain strong linkages so that ideas flow freely in both directions. In the scientific world, flows of information are of utmost importance and the diaspora can play a role in technology transfers. The potential for such interaction to accelerate diffusion of new ideas, products and processes is considerable. There has been increasing recognition that there is a significant potential for linking expatriate researchers and scientists with colleagues in their home countries so as to facilitate knowledge transfer and the development of tertiary research and education in the country of origin.

32. International migration networks may also be the vehicles for so-called social remittances. There is some evidence that the diaspora may be playing an important role in reshaping individual and social preferences as well as social norms, behaviours and expectations in the country of origin. Diasporas are important instruments for promoting development, economic opportunities and social and political change in the homeland.

33. The important role of diasporas can be enhanced by sound policies in both countries of origin and countries of destination. Countries of origin can build upon

existing social and cultural processes that facilitate the development of linkages between sending and receiving countries by providing direct assistance to diaspora organizations at origin and destination. This can be achieved by organizing events, providing information and encouraging expatriates to maintain linkages through the retaining of citizenship, and investing in property or business in the home country, ensuring taxation privileges, and maintaining voting rights and other involvement in the mainstream of national life. Countries of destination can also facilitate diaspora activity by encouraging cultural and language maintenance, assisting the development of networks, allowing dual nationality and recognizing that some citizens can retain a commitment to their homeland without compromising their citizenship at the destination. Examples of countries that have policies that facilitate the functioning and development of their diasporas are limited: this is an area of public policy that is still in its infancy.

IV. Return migration

34. One of the enduring myths of South-North migration is that there is an overwhelming desire for people from the South to relocate permanently in countries in the North. In fact, among many migrants there is a desire not only to retain valued aspects of their heritage but also to return to their homeland. Indeed, it has been argued that return migration is often constrained by destination-country policies that make frequent returns difficult. The potential for circular migration has not been fully tapped. Appropriate mechanisms that facilitate this type of migration can result in an easing up in respect of the drive for permanent settlement and can have the potential to curb irregular migration.

35. One of the enduring features of all diasporas is return migration to the homeland, although its incidence varies greatly. It is apparent that there can be significant dividends to the home country if expatriates return, especially when they are highly skilled in areas in demand in the labour market in the country of origin. Having expanded their knowledge and experience while abroad, immigrants return with access to a network of overseas contacts that can benefit their work at home. A substantial literature on return migration and studies of diaspora indicate that there is often a high level of interest among many expatriates in eventually returning to their home country. Indeed, return is often seen as being the conclusion to a successful migration.

36. There is a fear in some receiving countries that unskilled workers who enter on a temporary basis to meet labour shortages will inevitably become permanent settlers. This fear grew out of the experience of post-war Europe where several countries opted to cope with labour shortages by importing temporary guest workers who never returned home and subsequently developed substantial permanent communities. Modern forms of transportation and communication have greatly reduced the need for many temporary workers to have families join them in the destination. Lower cost of telephone communication, the introduction of e-mail and the fax and the speed and lower cost of international travel have made it possible for migrants not only to interact in real time with their home country on a regular basis but also to visit home more frequently. Many low-skilled migrant workers prefer to maintain a regular pattern of circular international migration because they are able to earn high incomes in countries of destination but do their spending in low-cost areas of origin. Many also wish to retain their traditions, culture and language and to

maintain strong wider family linkages, which can be more easily achieved at home rather than abroad.

37. Policy interventions to facilitate circular migration in developing countries can encourage migrants to maintain continuing commitments and involvement in countries of both origin and destination. They can also encourage migrants to eventually return permanently to their home countries. In the case of both strategies, Governments at both origin and destination can have policies and programmes to facilitate circular or return migration. Such policies, which could respond to interests of both origin and destination countries, would be most effectively developed where there are consultation, coordination and cooperation between countries of origin and destination.

38. Some countries have initiated programmes to encourage a "reverse brain drain" with some success, although the extent to which this was due to the programmes and how much was a result of rapid economic development are not clear. Some of the advantages flowing from these activities were an increase in interaction between scientists and engineers in the home countries, with expatriate colleagues facilitating knowledge transfer, investment and business cooperation. It may be that policies should be interested as much in encouraging "brain circulation" between countries and their diasporas as in encouraging permanent return. Indeed, such encouragement of interaction could in itself help promote the return of expatriates, too.

39. There is scope to introduce programmes that facilitate and encourage the return migration of expatriates with skills and experience considered to be of importance to the development needs in countries of origin. It would seem, however, that the role of government here, as is the case in encouraging the diaspora to be more involved in development in the home country, is one of facilitation and removal of obstacles to return rather than one of major interventions. It can build on the wishes of many to return to their home country. There is scope for government programmes to provide assistance to institutions and businesses that can make a strong case for "bringing home" highly qualified expatriate professionals. This should not entail subsidization of normal headhunting activity but, instead, should be reserved for individuals with highly skilled profiles and established career potential who can make a major contribution to society and the economic development of their country of origin. There is a need to investigate the "transaction costs" of a return to the home country so that returnees are not excessively taxed when transferring their accumulated wealth. Such programmes must also ensure that suitable jobs are available so that returnees can make full use of their talents.

V. Policy considerations

40. Policies and programmes designed by countries to maintain contact with their diaspora, encourage the maintenance of cultural traditions and native language, and develop and enhance linkages with, and financial flows to, the homeland are not new. Some countries have been involved in such activities for over a century. Countries have varied in respect of whether, and the extent to which, they have engaged their diaspora; the extent of engagement and involvement has ranged from active courting of expatriates through indifference to hostility. However, with the

rapid growth of expatriate communities and new forms of ICT, it is possible to engage diasporas in an immediate and effective way. This is a policy area that may assist development efforts in developing countries that have experienced significant emigration.

41. There has been a significant shift in the attitudes of some developing countries towards their diasporas. In the past, some Governments viewed the high level of emigration of contract labour and permanent settlers as reflecting negatively on their country. Migration was seen as a temporary phenomenon that had to be endured while the country made the transition to a more developed economy. The fact that thousands were forced to seek their destiny in other nations was perceived as a national failure. More recently, however, overseas workers have been seen as national heroes who are making a crucial and important contribution to national prosperity. Some countries have implemented policies and programmes to support their diasporas and encourage their overseas populations to maintain strong linkages with the homeland and to eventually return home. Recognizing that emigration is a long-standing and structural feature of their economies and societies, a number of Governments have sought to enhance the contribution of their expatriates to economic and social development at home by putting in place policies and programmes to enhance the positive effects and mitigate the negative consequences of outmigration.

42. At the receiving end, most developed countries genuinely desire to facilitate the progress of less developed countries. There can be mutually beneficial migration policies and programmes that countries of destination implement to reduce the negative effects of brain drain and produce positive impacts on economic and social development in countries of origin while meeting their own immigration needs. Moreover, the increasing global focus on security and the understanding that terrorism thrives best in unstable States give added impetus to the argument that an immigration policy that supports development in sending countries is worth considering.

43. Among the initiatives that receiving countries may wish to consider are: facilitating the sending of remittances to home countries through reduction of transaction costs; making pensions and other entitlements more portable so that they are not a barrier to return; encouraging migrants to maintain linkages with the home country; encouraging cultural and language maintenance; and facilitating the establishment of diaspora organizations. Circular and return migration can be encouraged by permitting dual nationality and recognizing that some citizens will have transnational loyalties.

44. It should be pointed out that policies that facilitate the progress of developing countries may pose some challenges for developed nations that implement immigration programmes to fill their particular needs. These include recruiting and retaining highly talented individuals who contribute to the international competitiveness of the destination country, attracting and retaining both skilled and unskilled migrants to fill jobs left vacant because of the ageing of the population, and retaining migrants to fill positions not wanted by the local population. Besides the obvious need for foreign labour, there are also practical challenges to implementing and enforcing return policies, including human rights issues.

45. There is a need to bring the discourse of development into immigration policy which, in most countries, is still considered only in terms of national interest,

national labour markets and demographic deficits. At present, the different ministries and government departments that typically handle development assistance are quite divorced from immigration departments within government structures. This compartmentalization of government prevents development assistance issues from being on the "radar screen" of immigration policymakers and presents a barrier to building development assistance considerations into migration policies. There is a need to consider whether it is possible to produce a development-friendly migration policy.

46. Initiation of policies and programmes to encourage development in less developed countries of origin need not be at the expense of the integrity and impacts of destination-country immigration policies. It is possible to arrive at mutually beneficial arrangements. This requires cooperation, coordination and dialogue between origin and destination countries.

VI. Conclusion

47. **International migration is a global issue and must be a central part of the global development agenda. It presents both opportunities for, and challenges to, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.[6] International migration is not a new phenomenon: people have been on the move since prehistoric times. They have been crossing national borders to search for better lives and to escape from armed conflict, human rights violations, stagnating economies, environmental degradation, demographic pressures and resource depletion. What is different now are the magnitude and complexity of migration. Today, migration affects every country in the world, as point of origin, transit or destination and, often, as all three at once. Women are no longer passive players accompanying family members but play an increasing role in international migration, accounting for about half of all migrants. With the decline in fertility in some parts of the world, migration has taken on increased significance, becoming an important component of population growth in many countries.**

48. **International migration was one of the more important issues to emerge from the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994; and it has been in the agenda of every major international conference since then. Calling for a comprehensive approach to managing migration, the International Conference on Population and Development spelled out the need to address the root causes of migration, especially those related to poverty; encourage more cooperation and dialogue between countries of origin and destination in order to maximize the benefits of migration; protect the rights of migrants; and facilitate the reintegration of returning migrants.**

49. **No one can prevent persons from moving across national borders. What can be done, however, is to manage migration flows in a more orderly way, one that maximizes the benefits and minimizes the costs to both sending and receiving countries as well as to the migrants themselves. This requires building country capacity to respond to the challenges of migration, and adequate and reliable migration data for developing effective policy. It requires a high degree of coordination and inter-State cooperation and collaboration both regionally and at the international level. It also requires an awareness and understanding**

of the social and economic implications of migration, the political will to manage migration flows and to address the consequences of migration, institutional capacity and trained staff, and resources to manage migration flows. The migration experience must be safe, orderly, humane and productive for all individuals and societies.

Notes

[1] See *International Migration Report, 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.XIII.4); and *World Economic and Social Survey, 2004: International Migration* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.II.C.3).

[2] *International Migration, 2002* ...

[3] *Migration News*, April 2005.

[4] United Nations, *World Population Policies, 2003* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.XIII.3), table 19.

[5] *Asian Migration News*, 16-31 January 2005.

[6] United Nations Population Fund, *International Migration and the Millennium Development Goals: Selected Papers of the UNFPA Expert Group Meeting, Marrakech, Morocco, 11-12 May 2005* (New York, UNFPA, 2005).